

DOLIR REVIEW

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Legislative Recap:

A Balanced Budget for 2003 and New Laws Affecting Child Labor

By Jackie Wood, Legislative Coordinator

In spite of the state budget crisis, the Missouri Legislature emerged from the 2002 session on May 17th with a balanced budget and new laws affecting the Department's Child Labor section of the Division of Labor Standards.

Going into the last week of session there was a \$167 million budget shortfall for fiscal year 2003. However, legislative leaders worked long and hard that week to agree on ways for the state to generate new monies to cover the shortfall. In the end, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 1248 that will bring in about \$112 million in new revenues and Senate Bill 1191 which allows part of the tobacco settlement dollars to be used for general revenue.

The other major piece of legislation for our Department affected child labor laws for Missouri. The Department asked Senator Betty Sims to introduce a bill (Senate Bill 1139) this session that would modify several provisions of the child labor laws. Some of the modifications included making sure Missouri's law reads the same as the federal law in regard to records that need to be kept on the employment of children; making certain information regarding children confidential; prohibiting door-to-door sales for children under 16 years of age; and allowing the Division of Labor Standards to consider the size of a business when determining civil damages. Senate Bill 1139 was sidetracked due to the Labor Committee wanting the whole Chapter of law containing these

provisions to be rewritten and reorganized in order to be more understandable. After the rewrite, Senator Sims combined Senate Bill 1139 with another bill she had, Senate Bill 923, et al. The bill then included the Department's modifications plus many good things for the children of the State of Missouri such as rights and responsibilities of foster parents; and a mandate that residential treatment services be provided to children with mental disorders or addictions. This bill passed the Senate very easily but was not taken up by the House until Wednesday of the last week of session. The bill was debated for two days with numerous amendments being offered and several amendments being adopted. The Senate refused to accept all of the amendments so the bill was sent to conference. The conference committee reached an agreement regarding the amendments the afternoon of Friday, the last day of session. The Senate adopted the conference committee's recommendation by a vote of 32 ayes and 0 noes. The House adopted the conference committee's recommendation with less than 30 minutes remaining in the session by a final vote of 98 ayes and 58 noes.

It is now time to move forward and look toward next legislative session which also could be quite interesting. More than half of the members of the current legislature will not be returning due to retirement or due to term limits prohibiting many of them from returning to Jefferson City next session.

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**SYLVIA M.
MEREDITH**

Title:

***Occupational Safety and
Health Consultant II***

Division:

Workers' Compensation

Section:

***Regulatory—Missouri
Workers' Safety Program***

Location:

Jefferson City

Employee Profile

Q What do you consider the most important thing your program/division does for Missouri citizens?

A The most important thing our program does is help Missouri employers improve workplace safety, reduce workers' compensation costs and regulate safety services provided by insurance carriers.

Q How does what you personally do in your job help or affect Missouri citizens?

A Experience, dedication and a true commitment to customer service are what I provide Missouri employers. My hands-on interaction with them allows me the opportunity to provide quality consultative educational services, conduct risk assessment inspections and interpret safety and workers' compensation laws and regulations.

Q How do you think what you do could be improved or changed to better serve Missourians?

A Our program is improving remarkably with the implementation of additional outreach programs, seminars and training that will reach a wide variety of Missourians.

Q What part of what you do gives you the most satisfaction/pride/feeling of accomplishment?

A I enjoy the on-going professional working relationships with businesses that request our services. Refining their confidence and positive attitude towards safety encourages me and puts a great big smile on my face.

Procurement Improvement Team Wins Award

The Department's Procurement Improvement Team was recently selected to receive the 2002 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity.

The procurement team was formed to reduce the amount of time it takes for Department personnel to make purchases. An analysis of the procurement system revealed that the process involved a complex set of guidelines and procedures that varied among the different divisions of the Department. The time spent fixing errors, tracking the status of orders, acquiring multiple approval signatures and processing over 900 unnecessary office supply orders led to the typical order taking more than 300 work hours just to get made.

After making changes recommended by the procurement team, the Department experienced a 97 percent improvement in the processing time of orders, a decrease in the number of errors made and the elimination of the need to track orders. All of this was accomplished without spending any additional money.

A process that used to take weeks is now completed in less than two days. By eliminating the number of handoffs, consolidating the different levels of management approval required and empowering staff to control their budget coding, the team far surpassed its original goal of reducing cycle time by 80 percent.

Members of the Procurement Improvement Team will receive their award at a ceremony to be held in July. They are:

- ◆ Ken Adams
- ◆ Juanita Barton
- ◆ Tammy Cavender
- ◆ Terry Old
- ◆ Lynne Thompson
- ◆ Kathy Wehmeyer
- ◆ Randy Wilkerson

The Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity recognizes outstanding accomplishments of employees in Missouri state government. It is a group award recognizing teamwork as an important factor in quality and productivity improvement.

Division of Labor Standards Participates in "Safe Jobs for Youth Month"

With the arrival of summer and hundreds of youth taking summer jobs and entering the work force, the Department's Division of Labor Standards hopes to move work place safety issues to the forefront and create a new focus on preventing teen injuries in the workplace. Each year approximately 200,000 teenagers are injured on the job (some fatally) in the United States. Of that, over 2,500 of Missouri's youth under 18 suffered injuries they considered severe enough to file for workers' compensation.

The Division worked with Governor Holden's office to have May officially proclaimed "Safe Jobs for Youth Month" in Missouri.

With many young people entering the workplace, some may be unaware of potential hazards on the job and will not know about the laws designed to protect them in working environments. "Missouri child labor laws allow young people to acquire work experience and income, while safeguarding their scholastic advancements and physical well-being," explained Catherine B. Leapheart, director for the Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

The Department's Division of Labor Standards is charged with carrying out Missouri's Child Labor Laws. "Our teens should enter the work force knowing that they will get worksite health and safety training. Educating our young workers on state labor laws is a responsibility that we must share," said Leapheart.

The Division of Labor Standards works closely with parents, educators, employers and other state agencies to further promote safe working environments for Missouri's youth.

Safe Jobs for Youth month is part of a national campaign sponsored by the State/Federal Child Labor Task Force "Youth Rules!" Campaign.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Our Fiscal Future

This year's legislative session was certainly a challenging one for everyone involved. Fortunately, our legislative leaders have worked hard to provide us with a balanced budget, although a lean one.

Our Department will experience additional core budget cuts totaling \$837,807 for fiscal year 2003. So, while we did a good job of looking for and finding ways to save money and work more efficiently in fiscal 2002, we are going to have to work even harder at it in fiscal 2003.

I am committed to doing everything I can to prevent any layoffs at DOLIR. I am currently looking at streamlining operations to make our operations run more efficiently with fewer employees. This will mean that, in some cases, employees resigning or retiring will not be replaced. We will also be restructuring different divisions of the Department for maximum efficiency.

We must continue to take the initiative and work smart and within our means. I know we can do it. DOLIR employees have demonstrated their willingness to do what it takes. I am confident you will all continue to work with me in the same professional and conscientious manner you have been.

Catherine B. Leapheart

Nominations, Please

If you have a co-worker who deserves special recognition for a job well done, you can nominate that person for Department Employee of the Month. Nomination forms (Form MODOL-4434) are available on the Department's Intranet site, or from each office. Nomination forms are due by the 15th of each month in order to select a recipient for the previous month.

Recent Employee of the Month winners are:

December 2001	Debbie Vaughan, Clerk IV in Administration's Research and Analysis Section in Jefferson City
January 2002	Paul Green, Maintenance Worker II in Administration's Facilities and Maintenance Section in Kansas City
February 2002	Becky Wills, Chief Administrator of the Department's Financial Management Section in Jefferson City

For additional information regarding the Department Employee of the Month program, contact Tammy Cavender at (573) 522-2546.

SO LONG MY FRIENDS!

As I approach the end of my time with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, it is becoming very difficult to find a way to say goodbye. I came to the department four years ago at the request of Director Karla McLucas. What a ride it has been since then.



You know many of the things that have happened during the past four years so I won't bore you with a litany. Suffice it to say, these have been busy years filled with change and opportunity. It has been my pleasure and privilege to work with all of you. Your dedication and professionalism are obvious every day as you give your all to serve the citizens of our state.

When Catherine Leapheart took charge as department director, I pledged her my total support and best efforts. I hope all of you appreciate what an outstanding leader she is. I have had many bosses during my life and she ranks right at the top of the list. You won't see many like her.

Some of my most enjoyable times have been those when I had the pleasure of recognizing you for your outstanding efforts. Service award ceremonies, employee of the month presentations, employee and team of the year recognitions, quality award ceremonies and other events gave me a chance to visit with and thank you for your hard work and your efforts to improve how we do things. I hope you all realize how talented and important you are.

The hardest part of leaving is that I know I will no longer be a member of this winning team. I hope in some way I have been able to make a difference and I hope my efforts have contributed to making the department a better place to work. There are many improvements that remain to be made. The department and the state are facing challenging times with reduced revenues and continuing demands for services. It will take all of your best efforts to find ways to streamline processes and become more efficient so that the department can continue to provide world-class service at minimal cost.

Thank you all for the privilege of working with you.

Tom

DOLIR Review is Going On Leave

Dear DOLIR Employees,

DOLIR Review is going on a temporary hiatus during the months of August and September because I will be out on maternity leave.

Check the Morning News on the DOLIR Intranet site at <http://services.dolir.state.mo.us/news/releases/morningnews.htm> for Department news and other important information any time.

DOLIR Review will be back on a monthly basis starting in October.

Joann Lindemann
Editor

Volunteers Sought for Employee Suggestion Program

The Department is seeking volunteers to serve on teams to review employee suggestions. Each division/agency has a team to review and research employee ideas and recommend approval or disapproval. Teams usually meet by phone or through electronic mail.

The committee will serve a one-year term beginning July 1, 2002. Employees from around the state are

welcome to volunteer for this program. Any interested employee is asked to submit the below information by electronic mail to Tammy Cavender at tcavender@dolir.state.mo.us.

Name
Division/Agency
Phone Number

Please submit your request by June 28, 2002.

Quote of the Month

“Fall seven times, stand up eight”

– Japanese Proverb

DUNN'S Safety Tips - COMMON BACKYARD PLAYGROUND DANGERS

Each year, about 51,000 children are treated in emergency rooms as a result of injuries related to home playground equipment. Most of the injuries are the result of falls. Most of the around 15 annual deaths are due to strangulations, though some are due to falls.

Falls on asphalt and concrete can result in serious head injury and death. Most public playgrounds are far safer than the average home playground set. Few home playgrounds have the needed soft fill in fall hazard areas. About a foot-deep layer of mulch or other soft material is required by codes where a child might fall six feet or more. There are other common hazards, such as entrapment and strangulation dangers. Check www.cpsc.gov for the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety.

Top 10 Checklist for Playground Safety:

1. Surfaces around playground equipment should be filled with at least 12 inches of loose fill, such as wood chips, mulch, sand or pea gravel.
2. Most stationary equipment should have at least six foot clear zone in all directions.
3. Any openings that can trap children (in guardrails or between ladder rungs) should be less than 32 inches apart or more than nine inches.
4. Guardrails should surround all elevated platforms and should be at least 29 inches high for preschool-age children and 38 inches for school-age children.
5. Look for exposed concrete footings, tree roots or rocks that could trip children.
6. Check for sharp edges and dangerous hardware, like “s” hooks or protruding bolts.
7. Make sure your child plays on age-appropriate equipment.
8. Playgrounds should be maintained regularly.
9. Don't dress kids in clothes with hoods or drawstrings that can get caught on equipment.
10. Supervise children while they play.

Source: William H. Kincaid, P.E., CSP,
Lockton Companies, St. Louis

*Steve Dunn is the Department's Safety Coordinator.
He is also Director of the Mine and Cave Safety and Health Consultation Program for the Division of Labor Standards.*

Governor's Council on Disability Holds Luncheon to Recognize Student Contest Winners

Six students were recently honored at a recognition luncheon for their creative posters and essays submitted in the 2002 Poster and Journalism Contests sponsored by the Governor's Council on Disability. The luncheon was part of the 2002 Power Up Conference at the Holiday Inn Select in Columbia, MO. Students were asked to design a poster or write an essay based on the theme "I Have A Dream ...Inclusion." Three recipients from each contest were selected to receive a \$1,000 savings bond for first place, a \$750 savings bond for second place, and a \$500 savings bond for third place. Jim Tuscher, chairman of the Governor's Council on Disability, and Donna Borgmeyer, disability program

representative with the Governor's Council gave a welcome address to more than 300 luncheon guests and presented awards to the students.

First place poster contest recipient was Sarah Williams. Sarah is a senior attending Brookfield High School in Brookfield, MO. Second place poster contest recipient was Michelle Hoefener, a student at Nichols Career Center in Jefferson City, MO. Ms. Hoefener is a junior. Third place recipient in the poster contest was Laurien Lewis. Laurien is a junior at Southwest R I Lincoln County High School in Ludlow, MO.

In the Journalism Contest, the first place essay recipient was Paul Camacho, a senior at Rockhurst High

School in Kansas City, MO. Receiving second place honors in the Journalism Contest was Erin Watts. Erin is a senior at Clopton High School in Clarksville, MO. The third place recipient in the Journalism Contest was Etosha Kamolmasrat. Etosha is a junior attending Nixa High School in Nixa, MO.

The purpose of the Poster and Journalism Contests is to reward excellence in art and journalism while increasing disability awareness among Missouri's youth. Both contests are open to middle and high school students, grades seven through 12.

Division of Employment Security Now Offering Customers More Online Options

Gracia Yancey Backer, director of the Missouri Division of Employment Security, recently announced that a new Internet service is available to unemployed Missourians. Weekly unemployment insurance benefit claims can now be filed through a Division website at www.mocclaim.com.

"This new service is beneficial to our customers in a variety of ways," noted Backer. "It allows our customers another method of accessing the unemployment insurance system and it expands the hours of service," Backer said. The Internet weekly filing is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the exception of normal maintenance time late Saturday nights.

Weekly unemployment claims are made after a new claim is filed, or an existing claim is reopened. They are required in order to claim weekly benefits.

Missouri has been using the Internet to file new and renewed unemployment claims since December 2000. From January 1 through April 30, 2002, the Division's website had been visited almost 58,000 times. "The weekly filing of unemployment claims is the next step in providing additional e-government services to our customers," said Backer.

The new/renewed claims and the weekly claims can be filed from almost any personal computer with Internet access capability. Unemployment insurance Internet transactions are kept confidential through the use of a Personal Identification Number (PIN) and current encryption technology.

Missouri unemployment claims can also be filed by telephone by calling the nearest Regional Claims Center.

REFLECTIONS

John Gaw retired May 31, 2002 after more than 40 years of service to the Department. Gaw worked as a Labor and Industrial Relations Manager in the Division of Employment Security's Benefits section in Jefferson City.



According to Gaw, he has several fond memories of his time with the Division of Employment Security.

"What I will remember most is how the staff pulls together in times of increased work loads, such as when Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA), an extended benefits program, or the current Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) is implemented," says Gaw. "The work gets done and we owe this to the dedicated staff in the Missouri Division of Employment Security and Department of Labor Sections that assist in the work, like Information Systems and the mail room, to name a few. Thanks to everyone who helped."

L I F E S T Y L E S

Retirees from May 2002

Appeals

Walter Plefka, Appeals Referee III

Division of Workers' Compensation

Barbara Ligons, Clerk IV

Division of Employment Security

John Gaw, Labor and Industrial Relations Manager, Benefits

David Hart, Unemployment Insurance Auditor II, UI Programs

Judith Keller, Office Support Assistant, Benefits

Delores Temming, Claims Technician II, Kansas City Regional Claims Center

New Employees from May 2002

Division of Labor Standards

Melinda Strobe, Senior Office Support Assistant

Division of Workers' Compensation

Carla Kolb, Senior Office Support Assistant

Promotions from May 2002

Administration

Roxanne Braun, Clerk IV, Information Systems

Lance Clingman, Print Services Technician II

Staci Fowler, Administrative Analyst II

Division of Employment Security

Donna Bowling, Claims Supervisor II, Springfield Regional Claims Center

Edith Gaddy, Claims Supervisor II, Springfield Regional Claims Center

Guy Hendry, Claims Supervisor II, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Gary Huey, Claims Supervisor III, Springfield Regional Claims Center

Anita Inman, Senior Office Support Assistant, Contributions Field

Joanna Mealy, Contributions Supervisor III, Employer Contributions

Linda Townsend, Claims Supervisor II, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Ronald Vest, Unemployment Insurance Auditor III, Contributions Field

Dona Windsor, Claims Supervisor II, St. Louis Regional Claims Center

Governor's Council on Disability

Linda Baker Oberst, Disability Program Specialist

Tabitha Rasnic is March Employee of the Month



Tabitha Rasnic, a legal assistant with the Division of Workers' Compensation's St. Louis office, is the Department's March 2002 Employee of the Month.

According to her co-workers, Rasnic possesses an "astonishing" work ethic that leads her to regularly and willingly seek out additional assignments while maintaining the high standards she has set for the completion of her primary job tasks.

Rasnic types and processes the awards for all 10 judges in the St. Louis office, as well as handling correspondence, mediation dockets and filling in as a receptionist. "Law firms would employ three to five people to do the same amount of work," her nominators say. And, they add, "she keeps a smile on her face, even when the going gets rough."

Gerri Dudenhoeffer is April Employee of the Month

Gerri Dudenhoeffer, a Clerk IV with the Department's Human Relations and Organization and Staff Development Sections in Jefferson City, is the Department's April 2002 Employee of the Month.



According to her co-workers, Dudenhoeffer "goes above and beyond to make sure the office runs smoothly and its customers get what they need on a daily basis."

Dudenhoeffer has taken on many new responsibilities in the past year, while performing duties for both sections efficiently and effectively. "Regardless of what is given to her, Gerri takes great pride to complete the task to the best of her ability, and with a smile on her face," co-workers say. "Because of her grasp of the position, she is able to act on her own initiative. She has shown, this past year, the tremendous understanding she has for the position, and the care and compassion she has for the employees of this department."

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